

Amherst Public Art Commission Meeting – October 4, 2013
First floor meeting room, Town Hall

Present: Eric Broudy, Rachel Hankinson, Bonnie Isman, Rene Theberge, Rosario Gaddier
Absent: Jenny Lind, Jim Wald (Select Board liaison)

Rene called the meeting to order at 11 am.

1. Minutes of September 5, 2013 were approved.

2. Chair's report on other organizations/fundraising. Rene met with Stacey Leonard (YAC) and with Tony Maroulis (Chamber). YAC has ended their teen public art projects in Amherst. Tony promptly made a donation to the Portal from the Amherst Area Chamber of Commerce and promised a personal donation as well. Rene attended the Chamber's After Five networking event and met several potential donors and future sponsors. APAC is getting close to our fundraising goal but additional contributions are still needed. Rosario said he would make a contribution.

3. Treasurer's Report. Rachel reported a current balance of \$1,130.09 in our account, but that may not include all checks that have come in. She and Rene will get an up to date report from Holly in the Finance Department.

4. Updates from Commission members. Eric met with Easthampton City Arts Coordinator Burns Maxey. She has a full time paid position funded by the city to work with a council of 20+ arts organizations and 7 subcommittees. The annual Bear Festival has been extremely successful, good for the local economy. Easthampton began with a town-wide meeting of arts organizations. 80 people attended, and 12 stayed involved. Now they are considering a 'cultural district' designation. (See more at http://www.massculturalcouncil.org/services/cultural_districts.asp) The large amount of factory space available in Easthampton for artists to use is an important resource which Amherst does not have. Cinda Jones may have an empty building in North Amherst. Amherst Media is looking for new space or building a studio. Rachel would like to see more connection with UMass and the colleges regarding arts space.

Eric will explore Pittsfield's arts scene next. Rene asked him to summarize his research in a written report.

Rosario is interested in curating the next Amherst Biennial. Rene suggested that we work on our goals for this year before starting on the next Biennial show.

5. Plans for the future. After much discussion, the following Action Plan for FY 2014 was approved unanimously. Moved by Rachel, seconded by Eric.

- 1) Develop Inventory/Map/Brochure of Public Art in Amherst for publication and online at amherstma.gov. Include pieces at colleges and university. (Rene and Bonnie have drafted a grant proposal to the Amherst Cultural Council to produce the printed version. Mike Olkin, Head of the Town's GIS department, has agreed to work on the online map. We will need a subcommittee with other arts groups for this work.)
- 2) Develop APAC web presence either at amherstma.gov or as independent website.

- 3) Propose what we want to see for public art and call in others as needed. Develop proposal then present to stakeholders for comment.
- 4) Complete Eric's summary of other Towns/Cities. Research and develop funding proposals and funding for art % idea. (This step is necessary to develop the proposal above.)
- 5) Identify future sites for public art and those existing sites that need decommissioning. (This will be part of the inventory for the public art map.)
- 6) Explore moving to more frequent showings at Town Hall (monthly or bi-monthly) by July 2014 to coordinate with Art Walk schedule and give more opportunities to local artists. (Based on feedback from participating artists, improvements would be needed to the gallery facilities and exhibit promotion.)

6. Other Business. Rene distributed Conflict of Interest information by email prior to the meeting. He reminded everyone to take the quiz. Rene reported that APAC will have an article at the Fall Town Meeting to enlarge the Commission from five to seven members. Rene will draft a memo explaining the need for two more members and arrange for 300 copies to be sent to Town Meeting members. We suggested possible Town Meeting members to make this motion at the meeting. Eric asked if we can explore some minimal funding for mailings, etc. Rene will check on this possibility.

The next meeting was set for Wednesday, November 6 at 11 am in the first floor meeting room at Town Hall.

Adjourned at 12:30 pm

Submitted by Bonnie Isman